
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 1171

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A HIGHER EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER POLICY BOARD.

SUMMARY:

This bill creates a Higher Education Technology Transfer Policy Board within Connecticut Innovations, Incorporated (CII) consisting of voting and nonvoting members. (The bill states that there are 13 voting members but authorizes the appointment of only 12).

The bill requires the board to identify business or technology sectors best promoting long-term job creation and economic growth. The board must determine how university-based research affects industry needs and recommend improvements to university programs supporting technology transfer and economic development. It must also develop plans for negotiating joint business-university research partnerships and support such negotiations. Every five years, the board must report to the governor and the Commerce Committee.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

HIGHER EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER POLICY BOARD

Board Membership and Procedure

Under the bill, the board's nonvoting, ex-officio members are the Higher Education (DHE) and Economic and Community Development (DECD) department commissioners and the chairperson of CII's board, or their designees. The DECD commissioner is the board's chairperson.

The DHE commissioner must appoint six voting members, all of whom must be faculty or staff at institutions of higher education. Three must be from UConn's Office of Technology Commercialization. Another three must be from an in-state private university or college with a major research facility and must be involved in the institution's

technology transfer office.

The governor and five of the six top legislative leaders each appoint one of the remaining voting members, who must be representatives from technology firms that are part of an economic cluster in the state. The House speaker does not have an appointment.

The board may create other positions it deems necessary and may fill those positions with board members.

The voting members serve four-year terms. Members are not compensated but are reimbursed for their necessary expenses, within available funds. Five board members constitute a quorum for transacting board business or exercising board powers. If a quorum is attained at a board meeting, a majority of the voting members present may transact business or exercise board powers. (The bill does not specify when the board must conduct its first meeting or how often it must meet).

The bill allows the board to solicit and receive funds from public or private sources to carry out its activities.

Board's Required Activities

The bill requires the board to develop and implement a plan to review the state economy. In its review, the board must determine which business or technology sectors would best promote long-term job creation and economic growth. It must also determine whether UConn or any private college or university represented on the board has adequate faculty and research programs to support industry needs for research, technology, and business or technology sector graduates.

The board must develop a method to review periodically all such education institutions' impact and programmatic needs. It must use that method to recommend improvements for their programs supporting technology transfer and economic development.

The board must develop and implement a plan (1) for these education institutions to negotiate research collaborations with in-state

businesses and industries for joint technology development and (2) to support these education institutions for such negotiations.

The bill authorizes the board to ask other state agencies for information, reports, and other assistance in carrying out its duties. These agencies include DHE, DECD, and CII.

Reporting Requirements

The bill requires the board's chairperson, by January 1, 2012 and every five years after that, to report to the governor and the Commerce Committee. The report must indicate:

1. which business or technology sectors would best promote long-term job creation and economic growth and whether the state's universities or colleges (public or private) have adequate faculty to prepare students for jobs in these sectors,
2. the success of technology transfer programs at UConn or any private education institution represented on the board, and
3. the success of UConn and private education institutions represented on the board in negotiating and implementing research collaborations, and any support the board has given them in such negotiations.

In the report, the board must also recommend necessary legislative actions to assist the board in meeting its charge.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Commerce Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 17 Nay 1 (03/22/2011)